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AUTHOR	Sabieh, Christine
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ABSTRACT

This paper asserts that in a world that has accomplished globalization by engulfing itself in the world of technology, the world of translation must not be too quick to join the bandwagon. Providing translators or students of translation with computerized translation tools is not the link to what makes the individual an effective translator. Language mastery, the researcher believes, remains paramount. The purpose of this paper is twofold. It is to show that technology does indeed play a role in completing a triangular relation and that is why the computer becomes a powerful partner essential in the making of the effective translator. Through the analytical derivation of awareness, attitude, behavior, assessment, and satisfaction, the researcher concludes that technology is able to offer an environment that makes available qualitative and quantitative exploration as a means to attain language mastery. Examples of translations in Arabic and English that highlight problems faced by students of translation are appended. (Contains 54 references.) (Author/SM)

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PLACING TECHNOLOGY AT THE VERTEX OF THE TRIANGLE WHEN MAKING AN EFFECTIVE TRANSLATOR

Dr. Christine Sabieh
Notre Dame University

ABSTRACT

In a world that has accomplished globalization by engulfing itself in the world of technology, the world of translation must not be too quick to join the bandwagon. Providing translators or students of translation with computerized translation tools is not the missing link to what makes the individual an efficient translator. Language mastery, the researcher believes, remains paramount. The purpose of the paper is twofold. It is to show that technology does indeed play a role in completing a triangular relation, and that is why the computer becomes a powerful partner essential in the making of the effective translator. Through the analytical derivation of awareness, attitude, behavior, assessment and satisfaction, the researcher concludes that technology is able to offer an environment that makes available qualitative and quantitative exploration as a means to attain language mastery.

The opportunity of growth within the field of translation is seen in the world of technology, especially in its service use via the Internet. Machine translation, it is said by Hutchins (1998), has provided a "service that would be impossible for traditional human translation. The output may well be poor in quality (and usually is). But it is clear that rapid translation of something that would otherwise be inaccessible and unread is welcomed by an increasing large number of people" (p. 13). Translators, he notes, need to become aware of the impact technology has on their profession. They need to become aware that machine translation has become a realistic option to many in need of translated work. Hutchins even notes "today few would argue that computerization must lead ultimately to translators as mere ancillaries (post editors) of full machine translation systems" (p. 10). Not only does the machine enable the production of large quantities of translated text in a short period of time, but it also produces a readable text in the target language (Bethoney, 1998; Hobby, 1997)

Over the past twenty years, the appearance of translation workstations has shown that it is possible to collaborate between text to be translated, technology and man to produce quality translated work. It is taken for granted that researchers in the field of artificial intelligence, with or without the aid of the translators, continue to work on ways to enhance computer-aided translation to resolve the ambiguities and the complexity of human language. However, in a world that has accomplished globalization by engulfing itself in the world of technology, the world of translation, I believe, must not be too quick to join the bandwagon. Translators need to have language skills and background information related to the subject matter in question of translation and to the tools. By providing translators or students of translation with computerized translation tools is not the missing link to what make the individuals efficient translators. According to Pym (1993), in his article, *On the Market as a Factor in the Training of Translators*, good translators are individuals who possess "the skills and contacts to find specific information when necessary" (p. 3) Moreover, Hayes (1987 in Hutchins, 1998) asserted, in his presentation at the AsLiB, that the computer has very little to do with translation.

Translating is converting text from one language to another. Such an act, the opponents of technology note, entails an art (Hutchins, 1998). For such an art, the translators are expected to be able to be flexible, able to cooperate with others, exchange information with in a language setting. The translators must first and foremost be language proficient; they must show competence in the target languages. Language mastery, I believe, remains paramount. And technology is able to help them along with the endeavor. The technology becomes the tool in which the translators use to communicate their work. It is not to be considered the translation tool itself.

Hamilton (1998) believes this is especially true as demands for increased linguistic competence has taken on a global flavor. The educator is being pressured to look past his traditional kingdom (Sabieh, 2000b) and his methodology to introduce new aids to help him in his endeavor to enhance his students learning of the target languages. Hamilton (1998) calls for the educator to perceive the language learner as a 'PC' user. With that in mind, it is important that the educator become aware of the computer as a powerful partner in the overall mission of language acquisition.

The purpose of the paper is twofold.

It is to show that technology does indeed play a role in completing a triangular relation, and that is why the computer becomes a powerful partner essential in the making of the effective translator.

The elements that exist in the environment do not all play a direct role in the end result: The translated text. These elements include the educator, the educational context, the students, the text material, the native and the target languages, the background of the subject matter, the resources, and the technology. To be more specific, the actual triangle that exists in this context is the direct relation that forms between the student of translation, the level of target language mastery and the use of the technology. Technology is to be placed at the vertex of the triangle when making the effective translator since it becomes the students' partner in their endeavor, and it is the target language's tool to enable enhancing the target language mastery and usage. The effectiveness of the bond that grows between the student of translation and the target language is a result of the effective use of the technology to meet the needs of the translator and his environment.

As part of my doctorate dissertation (1998), I was able to reinforce the idea that the computer provides a guaranteed learning environment. My results allowed me to conclude that when used effectively as a tool or tutor, the computer is able to bridge the gap between the students and the learning outcome. My research over the years continues to reinforce this ideology (For example, see Sabieh, 2000a; 2002b; 2002c). Thus, acquiring target language mastery is possible with the aid of the computer. Exposure to the target language minimizes fossilization because the students become aware of the target language learning process.

For effective language learning to take place it is also important to create empowered learning (Sabieh 1998; see Sabieh, 2002b; 2002c). By providing the students with a way to personalize their growth to address their learning styles and needs, the language learning environment becomes supportive, enabling the students to concentrate on communicative competencies; grammar, linguistic coding, socio-cultural rules and strategies, pace and practice responses, errors and mistake L1-L2 analysis (Diaz de Ilarraza, Maritxalar, and Oronoz, 1998),, and positive interlanguage differences (Canale

& Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 1991a; 1991b; Pica, 1994; Sabieh, 1998). As the students become more and more confident in the target language, their variable knowledge within the target language will move on to become part of the already acquired fixed knowledge (Diaz de Ilarraza, Maritxalar, and Oronoz, 1998).

That is why immersing or exposing the students as much as possible into the target language enhances the language learning experience. Any language learning experience that is to take place must be interactive and dynamic in process for there to be success in language acquisition (Rüschoff.and Ritter, 2001; Sabieh 1998; 2001; 2002a; 2002b; 2002c). Also, effective language learning needs to consider the manner in which students acquire correct grammatical structures. Hendricks (1998) notes that through the use of the computer, effective grammar learning can take place. He notes the success Brigham Young University has had not only in their Spanish CALL program but in the teaching of French, German, and Italian. Acquiring Japanese through chat, according to Toyoda and Harrison (2002) increases the language comprehension input and output of the students, which, in turn, enhances their language acquisition since the students are expected to negotiate target language meaning in relation to their native language, thus becoming increasingly aware of the interlanguage effect (Pica, 1994, Swain, 1995, Blake 2000). This also improves the students' writing and oral language ability (Sotillo, 2000; Barson, Frommer, & Schwartz, 1993), which are essential for translation students' language mastery.

The technology is able to provide the students with not only a psycho-lingual language learning experience, but also to a socio-lingual one (Belz 2002; Kramsch, 2000; Salomon & Perkins, 1998). The technology provides an ideal setting for the students' intercultural acquisition awareness that the target languages bring with them.(Belz, 2002; Pica, 1994; Toyoda. and Harrison, 2002; Warschauer, 1998).

Through a basic understanding of the impact technology can have on enhancing learning, the computer can be seen as a power tool (Sabieh,1999). It strengthens the demands made on the students' cognitive level, enforcing them to participate actively in their learning process. Its strength lies in the awareness that the technology acts as a delivery system allowing learning, language mastery and interactivity to take place through the computer whereby the computer, placed at the vertex of the triangle, links the students to their task. The computer becomes a motivator, driving the students to increase their target language mastery. The power element includes, according to Hendrick (1998), increased efficiency for the educator and the students, promotion of individualized learning strategies, immediate assistance and feedback, focused remediation, and. increased grammar and aural input. Sabieh (1998) also supports the findings. In brief, the computer can be used to enhance the students' target language basic skill acquisition and/or advanced skill acquisition; it can assess the students' fluency progress, making the students responsible for their own learning in a motivating and non-threatening medium that promotes individualized affective factors Through education and application, the students of translation discover the process of using the computer as a partner to meet their personal and professional needs with in the environment. They overcome the fear of being replaced by the technology. (Sabieh 2000c) Moreover, they must come to realize that the computer is a tool to help them reach their goal to become effective translators. Furthermore, it is not a tool to use as a means to finding an easy way

out doing the actual work, as many in the field of translation believe the machine translator role to be.

With the technological tool being used as the system assistant, the students may use, misuse or misunderstand the target language learning process in relation to their own language. However, based on the computer's feedback, they will receive for their work, the students will be made aware of the discrepancies between native and non-native languages, and they will be able to remedy the dilemma; thus, enhancing target language mastery. Toyoda and Harrison (2002) note that inappropriate feedback with in a learning set up is a characteristic that remains neglected or overlooked by many educators in the language class setting.

The four translation instructors and five students that I interviewed* felt that the basic importance of using the computer enabled them to use the specialized services that provide help features, such as spelling or grammar checks, and databases for specialized vocabulary specificity or variety. Such aids help them do the text translations in a shorter period of time.

I believe that the value of the technology is more than that.

Computer impact awareness enables the students to define the effectiveness of the computer for the students' use in their translation ventures to meet their cognitive, behavior, and/or affective needs. Thus, overall, what the technology is able to provide the students with is a self initiated, task oriented, meta-cognitive safe environment (Sabieh, 2002c)

The computer as a tool provides students with enough authentic sources to gain language mastery. Through the use of the World Wide Web, students may be exposed to target language exchange mediums through chat rooms, email, videoconferencing exchanges with native or non-native speakers of the target language (Carey, 2002; Mosquera Moreno, 2001; Sabieh, 2002c; Toyoda & Harrison, 2002). Moreover, there are enough search engines, specialized sites to also provide them with needed drills, tutors, and information gathering modes and resources (Burston 2001a; 2001b, Yablonsky, 1998). Furthermore, artificial intelligence research results have enabled target language mastery seekers to chat with chatterbots, virtual robots that are programmed to answerback and carry out dialogue in the target language (Mosquera Moreno, 2001).

Software or compact discs are also available as aids for language acquisition. Depending on the learning objective, students are able to choose from various types of activity programs, such drill and practice, tutorial, simulation, problem solving, games and content free software activities to facilitate remedial or mastery of the target language-process.

For advanced language remediation or mastery, I recommend the use of simulation and problem solving software. However, for basic language focus--my present concern as it is the essential criteria in the making of a translator--I recommend the use of Drill and Practice and Tutorial programs (Sabieh, 1998) as well as Concordances.

In using Drill and practice programs, the students are able to focus on previously learnt material through a lot of practice opportunities where feedback sequences are given to students' answers to questions posed relating to grammar, comprehension, vocabulary, etc. Tutorials, on the other hand, can also help students focus on overcoming language weakness or promoting mastery opportunities. Through a tutorial, the students may learn new information or may reinforce or review previously taken information with plenty of

opportunity to practice the information and have it reinforced through feedback. Again such work is self-paced allowing the students to be active or passive learners.

Using Concordance programs offers students rich mediums to acquire critical language awareness through the use of computational linguistic. According to Ahmad et al. (1986), "Wisbey (1962) pioneered the 'art' of concordance making by electronic computers while analyzing a German literary corpus" (p. 39). Tribble (2001) notes that many language instructors have already started to use corpus linguistic in their classes to help the students appreciate the diversity in language structure. Through the use of concordance programs and stored texts on the computer, be it from a reference source or an authentic piece, students are able to view one or more target language structures in corpus varying the data set up to enable maximum condition analysis. This can simply be done by lining up similar corpus data through computer program demands. Gabel (2001) shows how the use of concordances provides the students with easy access to large amounts of real language in use, which grammar textbooks or dictionaries do not. Through the concordance, the students are able to analyze how language is put together under different conditions; this facilitates language awareness and cultivates target language acquisition in an individualized and personal learning environment. The students are able to compare their language to the target language, becoming aware of interlanguage similarities and differences, bridging the gap between their own language performance capabilities and that of the target language. Even more effective is using concordances to provide on site comparison of various works in different languages (King 1989; Roussel, 1991; Rutherford, 1987). Barlow (2001) and Wang (2000; 2001) note that with parallel corpuses, through the use of parallel concordances, inductively, the students are able to analyze the words, phrase, or morphemes of the target and the native language since one is the translation of the other..

Dokter, Nerbonne, Schürcks-Grozera, and Smit (1998) in their article, entitled *Glosser-RuG: A User Study*, show how students in being able to analyze the morphology of a language and use computerized dictionary help features promote more effective language mastery, similar to drill and practice exercises, but in a more authentic learning medium. It allows the students and the educator to focus on improving communication skills yet at the same time it supports the students in developing their comprehension and reading skills and in acquiring target vocabulary in its context. By providing online information to the students, they presented the study to show how they were able to improve the students' comprehension of the French language (Dokter, Nerbonne, Schürcks-Grozera, & Smit, 1998). Roosmaa and Prószéky (1998) note that the rationale for use of Glosser in languages of French and English can be used in other languages, such as Bulgarian, Hungarian, Estonian, and Spanish.

Rüschoff, and Ritter (2001) are believers in the effectiveness of template based learning, whether through concordances or authoring tools, as a means to get students to concentrate not only on the linguistic structure of the language but also to provide a framework to assist the students in building structured language yet constructing varied semantic complexities enforcing both Piaget and Papert's emphasis on language mastery through constructivism. Students need to be able to explore, become aware, understand, communicate to then acquire effective language, especially foreign language proficiency beyond the level of linguistic structure and vocabulary acquisition (Rüschoff & Ritter, 2001). This is best done in mediums where the students feel autonomous (Sabieh, 2002c).

The students are able to remain active, creative and socially interactive enabling themselves to learn the language through construction and multiple functionality of the language based on how they perceive the need at that moment to be (Sabieh 2002c; Rüschoff & Ritter 2001). They become confident in their use of the target language.

In short, once students and educators become aware of how to best use the technology, Mosquera Moreno (2001) advises to design its use to meet the needs with in the learning environment.

Once technology meets the students' needs, it then enables them to carry out their goals in becoming effective survivors--translators meeting future authentic work related environments and customers. Thus, the students define their locus of control and self esteem in being able to translate texts effectively, based on comprehension and target language structure mastery; this, in turn, also leads to educator and translation program satisfaction.

Rüschoff & Ritter (2001) note that since language plays an active role as a constructor of knowledge, the educator must use it to his advantage. Within a communicative learner centered class set up, learning takes place through an active process of exchange in which the target language(s) used within the setting construct(s) the needed knowledge based on the awareness of what the students know and do not know. The educator is able through group projects, simulation or role playing create language rich and culture rich environments to help the students of translation assess their own target language mastery. Hendricks (1998) suggests that technology enables the educator to make the activities interesting, attractive and motivating and, at the same time, provide the students with authentic language exposure.

The use of the technology, in turn, enhances the students' attitude and behavior assessment, bringing about change more positively since the use of the computer increased the confidence of users. The users perceive themselves as not only having the skills needed to become effective translators but also able assess and meet any culture rich environment needs since they have accommodated to work in diversified set ups. .

Whipple (2001) stresses that communication—verbal or nonverbal--is the key to the students' ability to translate the text in a valid and reliable manner. However, Bethoney (1998), is quick to point out that in any condition, the quality of a translation—be it human or technology based—is in direct relation to the quality of the original text. So, once the text has been evaluated for quality, the text needs to be first and foremost, read and understood. The students need to be able to know what the text is about. The next step is to have the comprehension checked against background information on the subject to ensure correct comprehension of the text. Third, the approach to the way the text is to be written up linguistically needs to be exposed, and, then, the way mode of delivery of the text is to be identified. Step five entails outlining the plan of action. Step six identifies who is to collaborate with the work, and step seven includes writing up, editing and presenting the work in the appropriate target language. Whipple (2001) concludes that a "translation is as much an art as anything" (p. 27). Thus, languages of presentation are filled with meanings that are unique to the reader or the listener.

Within an intercultural working environment, it is important for the students of translation to assess the work that needs to be done. According to Freivalds (1999), the four software strategies for translation include controlled language, translation memory, machine translator and the Internet services.

However, Hutchins (1999) notes that in the field of translation four types of translation demand exist based on the quality of work needed in the translation. Whether it is to be dissemination, assimilation, interchange or infoaccess quality, the translated work must include both a machine translated and human translated dimension to meet the demands of the environment from where the request was made.

Many translation workstations today on the market have multilingual facilities. Apart from word processing services, a translation workstation may record or send electronic mail. They are also able to manage terminology databases, provide facilities for concordance, and have search facilities. Given all that workstations do, they do not erase the existence of language weaknesses. Having weakness in the target language does not allow for the making of the well-rounded translator. The translation machines' value have their importance in that they enable the translators to evaluate what areas within the texts need more linguistic or semantic focus (Bethoney, 1998).

I recommend that the educator needs to take a holistic approach to the study of producing effective translators: As it stands today, based on interviews and my readings, I see that many programs in the Middle East, specifically in Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates, teach translation in a traditional manner expecting students to learn mostly through rote, since translation students tend to have, in general, weak target language acquisition (Abdellah, 2002; Ahmed, 2002; El-Sakran; 2002).

A basic complaint from the four translation teachers* was that the translation students have basic weaknesses in the native language as well as the target languages. They tend to have problems in basic language structure, language comprehension, literary background and culture. The five translation students I spoke to voiced the same problems. The eight translated texts, translated from French to Arabic and /or English by eight students and the Arabic text, translated into English by one junior student in a translation program documented the weaknesses in language structure and comprehension (See Appendix). When asked for overall comments from the translation students, they admitted that the texts were difficult to comprehend and they did not know enough information about the background setting. Linguistically, their work showed basic structural problems. Such problems amongst translation students, the translation instructors' note, were unacceptable and could be controlled from the onset—they believe the university should have a different acceptance and selection process. I disagree. I believe it is the curriculums' duty to work with the students to help them master the language. The technology as discussed above can help deal with the dilemma. Effort must be on all stages within the process, and that is why it is very important to identify and clearly define the goals of the program and the objectives of the approach before designing the making of the translator.

Worldwide, it may be that translators or translation students continue to use machines in most of their work; however, the machines cannot and should not replace the function of a translator. It should not be the question of adopting and following the bandwagon blindly.

Moreover, a translator is not considered effective if he has not mastered fluency in at least two or three languages. It is here where the computer holds its power. The computer helps create the effective translator. This implies that the technology should be integrated into the curriculum to satisfy pedagogical needs (Hendricks, 1998). I

especially recommend the technology to be used to help promote the needed language mastery.

Thus, with awareness and usage of the powerful partnership the technology maintains, the students' attitude, behavior, assessment and satisfaction with the technology is strengthened. The overall working endeavor becomes one. I conclude that technology is able to offer the students of translation or the translators an environment that makes available qualitative and quantitative exploration as a means to attain language mastery. This leads to acknowledging that the translator's efficiency is in direct relation to language fluency that may best be acquired through the use of concordances, tutorials, and drills and practice programs.

* Please note that although the numbers do not allow me to show statistical representation worldwide, I believe the results do provide a perspective of what exists in the field of translation

Appendix

The examples below are translations in Arabic and English to show the problems the students of translation have in general.

Please note that the examples may belong to more than one category of problems, but I have grouped them together to show a focus on one aspect of the dilemma.

Examples of translation in English and Arabic to show problems in structure

Original text in French -- Dimanche prochain, le grand événement sera la Pâque orthodoxe.

A. Translation in English

Example 1 - The great event next Sunday will be the Orthodox Easter.

Example 2 - Orthodox Easter shall represent the great event next Sunday.

Example 3 – A big event, the orthodox Easter, will be on the coming Sunday.

B. Translation in Arabic

في الأحد المقبل، انّ الحدث الكبير هو ما يصادف عيد الفصح لدى الظوائف الشرقية.

Examples of translation in English and Arabic to show inappropriate comprehension

Original text in French -- Voilà déjà belle lurette que les papistes et les parpaillots ont fêté la résurrection de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Chirst, mais nous autres les orthodoxes, nous retardons toujours un peu.

A. Translation in English

Example 1 – It's wonderful that the popes have celebrated the resurrection of Our lord : Jesus, but we, the orthodox, are always a little bit late.

Example 2 – Here's an example that the papists habe already celebrated the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ but we the Orthodox are always a bit late.

Example 3 – It is rejoicing that the papists and protestants have come together to celebrate the resurrection of Our lord Jesus Christ. However, we, the remaining orthodox, come a little late.

B. Translation in Arabic

هكذا تكون المهزلة الجميلة، فيحتفل الباباوات و البطاركة في قيامة سيدنا يسوع المسيح، امّا نحن الارثوذكس ، نتاخر دائما قليلا.

Examples of translation in English and Arabic to show lack of background knowledge

Original text in French - Ces réjouissances mystiques ne m'empêcheront pas d'aller voter. Bien que je ne sois pas français par le sang mais seulement par le sol – autant dire un Français de seconde zone, un citoyen série B – j'ai le droit de vote.

A. Translation in English

Example 1 – Those mystical jubilations will not prevent me from voting. Though I am not born of a French blood but French by the land I live in, in other words French from a second zone, a second degree citizen, I have the right to vote.

Example 2 – These mystic celebrations won't prevent me of voting. Eventhough I am not French in blood but only in land, in other words A second Zone French, a B-tpe citizen and I have the right to vote.

Example 3 – This mystic happiness won't forbid me to vote even if I'm not french by blood but only by the place. I am a french of second zone and a citizen of group B and I have the right to vote.

B. Translation in Arabic

هذا الفرح الماسواي لا يشجعني ابدا على الانتخاب فالشيء الجيد بانني لست فرنسي الدم بل فقط فرنسي الروح – بكلام اخر فرنسي من منطقة ثانية، مواطن فئة ب – لي الحق بالانتخاب.

Examples of translation in English and Arabic to show lack of cultural knowledge

Original text in French -- Ah ! ma pauvre dame, quelle époque ! Une religion exotique, un nom difficile à écrire et à prononcer.

A. Translation in English

Example 1 – Oh! My poor lady, what's an era!

Example 2 – Ah! My poor Lady, what an epoch!

Example 3 – Oh! My accused soul, what century are we living in!

B. Translation in Arabic

سيدتي المسكينة، يا لهذه المرحلة! فالديانة متنوعة، كلمة صعبة الكتابة واللفظ، فالادب الفرنسي هو قسم صعب!

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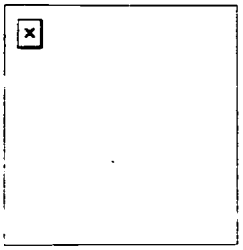

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